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ABSTRACT

The role of governors in higher education was studied through a 1984 survey of 70 former governors from 40 states. Attention was directed to issues such as: how often and when governors get involved in university issues, the influence of various higher education constituencies on gubernatorial decision making, gubernatorial views on private higher education, and governors' perception of impact on higher education. Findings indicate that governors play an important role in setting the tone and texture of statewide public higher education. Fifty-one percent of the former governors indicated that they spend at least 10 percent of their time on issues related to higher education, while 9 percent of the governors spent 20 percent or more time on higher education issues. Findings support Lowi's process model that suggests that the type of issue determines the level of policy intervention. Governors and their immediate staff were in frequent monthly and weekly communication with state officials, including bipartisan legislative leaders, higher education legislative committees, and state coordinating or governing board staff. Governors were the most influential proximate decision makers because of their control of the executive budget process. Former governors, regardless of political affiliation and geographical region, were evenly split over state support to private higher education. (SW)

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GOVERNORS AND HIGHER EDUCATION: AN UNSTUDIED RELATIONSHIP

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ASHE Association for the Study of Higher Education
The George Washington University/One Dupont Circle, Suite 630/Washington, D.C. 20036
(202) 296-2597

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GOVERNORS AND HIGHER EDUCATION: AN UNSTUDIED RELATIONSHIP

by Richard A. Zollinger*

Today, at the same time that many states face declining college and university enrollments, possible campus closings, and reduced federal financial aid for students, higher education is being trumpeted as "a top priority of America's governors."[1] While media attention to the subject may be new, gubernatorial activism on behalf of higher education is not. Governors have always been influential in shaping state higher education programs and policies because they are responsible for the actions--the successes as well as the failures--of a state's public units, just as they are responsible for other state agencies. In fact, the governor in each of this country's fifty states has been referred to as the key person in the development of higher education policy in a state (Millett, 1970).

While past research into the politics of higher education provides colorful and varied examples of gubernatorial involvement,[2] these analyses are deficient in at least two respects. First, they consist largely of single-state or single-event descriptions which lack generalizability across states. Second, they have tended to focus on university-legislative branch interaction and have ignored the impact of the executive branch on postsecondary education. Thus it can still be said that "the role of the governor in higher education policymaking is largely unexplored" (Gove and Floyd, 1976). Or, as Morehouse says: "despite the

* Adjunct Assistant Professor, Institute of Government and Public Affairs.
Director, Illinois Resource Network
1205 W. Oregon, Urbana, Illinois 61801 (217/333-8770)

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significance of the office, the impact of the governor on policy has been relatively unstudied, except for descriptive accounts" (1976).

This paper not only describes the situation in several states, it is also primarily concerned with the role of the state's chief executive. Specifically, it analyzes a 1984 survey of 70 former governors from 40 states which explored several issues pertinent to governors and higher education.[3] For instance, how often and when do governors get involved in university issues? What political actors are viewed by governors as most or least influential in higher education policymaking? What opinion do governors have about state aid to private higher education? What do they consider their highest achievement in the area of higher education?

BACKGROUND

A recurring theme in recent research on the politics of higher education is that the governor, in most states, has become the one dominant figure in higher education (Carnegie Foundation, 1976). Brubacher and Rudy (1976) see the expansion of state services in the early twentieth century, particularly in public higher education, as shifting administrative control from the legislature to the governor. The importance of the governor is based on the power of that office to raise revenue; to appropriate funds for university operations, programs and capital improvements; and to enact legislation which impacts on university administrative rules and regulations (Millett, 1974; Rosenbaum, 1976; Colburn & Scher, 1980). According to these views gubernatorial stewardship of higher education is so pervasive, the problems so pressing and the financial demands so great, that state executives cannot avoid direct intervention.

Hurd and Axelrod (1972) identify several factors that have boosted the governor's influence since the early 1950s: 1) growth of the executive budget system, 2) the government reorganization movement which strengthened the role of the governor in terms of veto and appointment authority, 3) the growth of the governor's immediate staff thereby enabling the office to analyze and take action on issues, 4) increased visibility through the media, 5) gubernatorial initiatives and lawmaking and 6) the National Governors Conference as a forum for exchanging views on state higher education issues. The Educational Commission of the States points to another area in which the governors play an increasingly important role: regulating and approving federal funds that are passed on the states for a variety of postsecondary programs (Muller et al., 1979). These studies suggest that the policymaking authority of governors in postsecondary education falls into four general categories: proposing legislation, vetoing legislation, vetoing appropriations (including line-item vetoes) and general policy and regulatory authority including appointments to statewide governing or coordinating boards and university governing boards.

The executive budget process is undoubtedly the most effective means by which the governor influences higher education programs and policy (Gould, 1966; Budig, 1969; Nowlan, 1976; Hiett, 1978). Glenny and Dalglish (1973), in a study of the constitutional and statutory autonomy of public universities, conclude that a professionally staffed state budget office is crucial to the implementation of a governor's agenda for higher education. In addition, strategies often used by governors to secure university acceptance of budget directives or controls include negotiated settlements,

commissions or audits aimed at exposing embarrassing fiscal problems, and withholding or vetoing institutional funds.

Notwithstanding the importance of the executive budget, governors in fact have relatively little "formal" control because of the vast size of state government. Management tends to be the responsibility of an independent board; even if board members are appointed by the governor. There is little or no formal control over university staff appointments even at the highest policymaking levels. Leaderle (1976) argues that it is clear that governors have very little control over higher education through formal organizational channels. Moreover, there is a widespread societal belief that higher education is independent of politics and therefore not outside the reach of gubernatorial control.

A comprehensive report on the politics of higher education across states by Eulau and Quinley (1970) focuses almost exclusively on university-legislative relations, although it does contain several examples of the influence of a dominant governor. A significant cross-state finding is that most state legislators look to their respective governors for cues and believe that governors should set the pace for directing higher education (p. 59).

The Role of Governor

Early descriptive studies suggest that governors pay primary attention to legislative leadership and spend less time on managerial functions (Ransone, 1951; Jewell, 1977). The growing complexity of statewide problems has forced governors to take the initiative in developing legislative programs. Such initiatives are often pragmatically

motivated. Both Anton (1966) and Leone (1969) point out that governors are constantly trying to enhance the image of their administration in the eyes of the public and to distinguish it from the day-to-day operations of the state buresucracy. Since the bureaucracy, particularly higher education, rarely requires prolonged intervention, the state executive seeks changes in the organization as one means of influencing it. Anton (p. 112) maintains that unless the governor changes the organization in some way, there will be little for which the governor can take credit and nothing to show that his tenure had any impact. In essence, some governors may view organizational innovation, whether it is tied to high technology, new capital construction, or upgrading faulty salaries disciplines in short supply, as simply one means to establish a public legacy for their administration.

Schlesinger's (1972) study of governors' formal authority identified four major factors: tenure in office, appointment power, executive budget control, and veto power over bills particularly appropriations. While these formal powers vary among states, Schlesinger found that large states with high proportions of urban populations were more apt to have governors with strong formal authority. Ransone (1979) posits that tenure in office is the formal power that has the greatest significance. If tenure potential is weak, the governor is more apt to depend on his other formal authority as well as on the influence vested in his role as a state political leader.

Sharkansky's (1968) study of 592 agencies in 19 states found that legislatures respond more favorably to a governor's recommendation than to an agency's direct request. Even more crucial, without a favorable

recommendation from the governor, a state unit is unlikely to get any substantial increase in its appropriation. Gubernatorial policymaking through agency budgets usually embraces the notion of incrementalism. Governors limit political controversy by generally accepting past evaluations of a budget at an agreed base level, while focusing negotiation on those items that an agency seeks for the first time. Weinberg (1977), in a study of state executives, found that incrementalism is most often utilized because of the limited information available to the governor and his staff. In practice, it is likely that a combination of incrementalism and legislative dependence on gubernatorial recommendations actually helps shape the vast majority of state agency budgets.

Policy Intervention Models

Several conceptual models help explain gubernatorial postsecondary education policy interaction. One links a particular policy outcome/output with socio-economic characteristics (Dawson and Robinson, 1963; Dye, 1966). A second model links state political cultures (e.g., moralistic, traditionalistic) with both the policy output and the process (Elazar, 1966). The model deemed most appropriate for this paper was developed by Ted Lowi. It suggests that policy intervention by a governor depends on the issue or policy under consideration (Lowi, 1964).

According to Lowi, the type of issue determines the policy process or the level of intervention. Lowi envisions three policy process types: distributive, redistributive and regulatory. Distributive policies confer benefits to a large number of beneficiaries. Because the demands upon the governor are many and the process diluted among many interests, log-rolling

is often required to keep the various coalitions happy (e.g., the awarding of a new technology center at more than one university). Redistributive policies take benefits from one group and confer them upon another (e.g., a change in the parental income level available for state scholarship aid). Here the pressure on the governor is so strong that the policy outcome may be determined by select policy elites. Lastly, regulatory decisions usually involve bureaucratic or procedural issues that restrain the options of a specific group (e.g., state auditing procedures or freedom of information regulations).

While Lowi's typology can be useful in conceptualizing what types of issues or level of involvement will require gubernatorial involvement, it has some limitations. For instance, it forces us to put an issue in a single category even though it may also fit into another.

Braybrooke and Lindbloom (1963) identify proximate decision makers as those closest to the actual development of policy in contrast to influential parties (e.g., coordinating boards, university presidents, trustees) who frequently implement these policies. The governor is the most powerful proximate state decision maker in higher education because of the formal authority and power inherent to the office. The importance of gubernatorial power in policymaking is related directly to the distribution and redistribution of educational benefits. The major societal benefit of higher education is knowledge. Both Waldo (1970) and Wirt (1976) maintain that colleges and universities are themselves a miniature political system providing society the needed services of knowledge, skills, status, and certification. Because not everyone can share in these benefits equally, there is increasing competition over their distribution. As a result, the

governor is called upon to spend increasing time on the allocation of public budget dollars among these institutional power centers and to establish priorities that influence their direction.

The data generated by the survey of former governors confirm several of these insights.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Thirty-six (51 percent) former governors indicated that they spent at least 10 percent of their time on higher education issues, while 9 percent (six former governors) said they spent 20 percent or more time on postsecondary issues (see Table 1). At the other extreme, only 6 percent (four former governors) spent minimal time (4 percent or less) on higher education issues.

A closer inspection of Table 1 reveals that almost one-third (13) of the Democrats spent 15 percent of their time on higher education issues, while only 13 percent (four) of the Republicans spent comparable time on postsecondary issues. This suggests that Democratic governors are much more likely than Republicans to spend at least 15 percent of their time on higher education issues.

While these data should be interpreted cautiously, it is nonetheless interesting to note that 17 former governors believed that higher education was salient enough to require 15 percent of their time. This is contrary to the popular notion that higher education is generally ignored by governors. In fact, the problems presented by colleges and universities (which use a sizable chunk of a state's tax dollars) are an integral part of the whole network of issues facing a governor (Goodall, 1976, p. 42.).

Table 1

GUBERNATORIAL TIME SPENT ON HIGHER EDUCATION AND STAFF ASSISTANTS ASSIGNED TO HIGHER EDUCATION

Political Party	Percentage of Time						Number of Gubernatorial Assistants				
	0-4% No. (%)	5-9% No. (%)	10-14% No. (%)	15-19% No. (%)	20% or over No. (%)	Total No. (%)	0 No. (%)	1 No. (%)	2 No. (%)	3 or more No. (%)	Total No. (%)
Democrats	1 (2)	13 (19)	11 (16)	8 (12)	5 (7)	38 (56)	9 (14)	13 (20)	12 (19)	3 (5)	37 (57)
Republicans	3 (4)	15 (22)	8 (12)	3 (4)	1 (2)	30 (44)	3 (5)	17 (26)	2 (3)	6 (9)	28 (43)
Total	4 (6)	28 (41)	19 (28)	11 (16)	6 (9)	68 (100)[a]	12 (19)	30 (46)	14 (22)	9 (14)	65 (100)[b]

a - Excludes two non-respondents.
b - Excludes five non-respondents.

Table 1 also reveals that 82 percent (53 former governors) had at least one special assistant for higher education, while nine respondents had three or more higher education assistants. When the responses were divided by political party or geographic region, very little variation was found. One noteworthy geographical variation is that former governors from the western states were more likely to have a gubernatorial assistant for higher education than were respondents from the Northeast, Midwest or South.

Issues that Warranted Gubernatorial Attention

Former governors were most frequently involved in issues related to faculty salaries or university program expansion or contraction. Additional issues that required gubernatorial attention included new school creation (e.g., medical, law), private higher education, and competing aspirations among universities and colleges (e.g., expanded missions/programs). Issues that were least apt to warrant gubernatorial involvement included athletics, collective bargaining, admissions, and university research priorities (see Table 2).

When responses were compared by political party, few variations were evident; the most notable difference was private higher education. The state's role in private higher education was the single most pressing issue for the Republicans but merited only a fifth-place ranking by Democratic governors.

The three issues warranting the greatest amount of gubernatorial attention either had a counterpart at the state level (i.e., faculty salaries/state employee salaries) or could challenge other political

Table 2

RANKING OF SPECIFIC HIGHER EDUCATION ISSUES REQUIRING GUBERNATORIAL ATTENTION

ISSUE*	ALL GOVERNORS	DEMOCRATS	REPUBLICANS
Faculty Salaries	1	1	2
Inst. Expansion or Contraction	1	1	2
Creation of New School	2	2	4
State's Role in Private Higher Education	3	5	1
Tuition	3	3	3
Competitive Aspirations of University	4	5	5
Organization and Restructuring	5	4	7
Program Emphasis	6	6	9
Campus Unrest	7	8	8
Spiraling Instructional Cost	8	9	6
Research Priorities	9	7	11
Admissions	10	8	10
Faculty Workload	11	9	12
Controversial Speakers	11	10	11
Collective Bargaining	12	11	12
Athletic Programs	13	12	13

* Additional issues mentioned by governors included: development of new coordinating boards, integration, library facilities, merger, capital improvements, attracting new instructional personnel and legislative funding.

constituencies (i.e., a new regional medical school or campus). Governors generally stay away from direct identification with campus or institution-specific issues (e.g., research priorities, admissions) unless the issue is juxtaposed with an accepted or recognizable state norm or practice. Governors are more apt to intervene directly on issues that are tied to recurring budget commitments. At the same time, gubernatorial identification with a particular university program is often solicited by a president or chancellor who has recognized that executive support is crucial for moving major institutional programs forward (Budig, 1969).

Lowi's typology of policy intervention offers some additional interesting insights into these issues. Salaries, institutional expansion or the creation of a new professional school affect many competing post-secondary interest groups and fit Lowi's definition of a distributive policy. Other issues, like tuition, involve redistributive policy intervention. For instance, a governor may support a level of university funding predicated on enactment of a specified tuition increase. While not emphatically formalized by the governor, the university may have no choice but to increase tuition to meet projected expenditures. The governor can explicitly set in motion a redistributive policy process by reducing a university's funding level. A tuition increase will influence enrollment demand by altering the mix of students who can afford to attend a particular college or university. In contrast, governors rarely intervene in regulatory policy issues because these tend to be internal to a particular campus or are routinely handled by other state bureaucratic units.

Gubernatorial Contact With Selected Actors

Almost one-third (23) of the former governors indicated that they or their immediate staff had daily contact with one of five selected policy actors regarding higher education (see Table 3). Governors or their immediate staff members were most apt to have daily contact with legislative leaders followed by officials from statewide coordinating or governing boards. While the daily contact is admittedly infrequent, state legislative leadership has continual access to the governor due, in part, to political "log-rolling" inherent in the appropriations process and to their physical proximity to the governor. The same pattern of interaction holds true for weekly contact between the governor and his staff and significant higher education actors. It is noteworthy that one-quarter (23 percent) of the respondents were in weekly contact with at least one public university president, while only 4 percent were in touch with private university presidents. When monthly interaction patterns are added to daily and weekly totals, it is apparent that governors or their immediate staffs solicit input from private higher education much less frequently than they do from the legislative leadership, statewide coordinating or governing board staff, or public university presidents.

The findings in Table 3 affirm the notion that there is communication with both the executive and legislative branches on issues pertaining to higher education. While the governor may be the dominant actor in setting overall policy direction, the legislative branch is frequently consulted.

Most institutions of private higher education are probably indifferent at this time to any type of intervention from the state capitol. However, with states gaining more authority over monies once held by the

Table 3

GUBERNATORIAL CONTACT WITH SELECTED ACTORS IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Frequency of Contact	Selected Actors: Coordinating or Governing Board (Dir./Staff) No. (%)	Public University Presidents No. (%)	Private University Presidents No. (%)	Legislative Leaders No. (%)	Higher Education Legislative Committees No. (%)
Daily	7 (10)	1 (1)	1 (1)	9 (13)[a]	5 (7)[a]
Weekly	22 (31)	16 (23)	3 (4)	27 (39)[b]	20 (28)[b]
Monthly	23 (33)	36 (52)	22 (31)	19 (27)	27 (39)
Yearly	2 (3)	7 (10)	28 (40)	7 (10)	7 (10)
Never	6 (9)	1 (1)	7 (10)	0 (0)	2 (3)
Other	10 (14)	9 (13)	9 (13)	8 (11)	9 (13)
Total	70 (100)	70 (100)	70 (99)*	70 (100)	70 (100)

* Variance due to rounding.
a Includes daily contact while legislature in session.
b Includes weekly contact while legislature in session.

federal government, private higher education may find it helpful to increase communication with the governor and his immediate staff. Being "odd-man-out" may have worked for the private sector in years past, but the growing interest of governors in boosting higher education, particularly in economic development, does suggest that the private sector can get a larger share of the opportunities. What is not apparent from the pattern of gubernatorial contact with public university presidents is which universities are routinely consulted? It is unlikely that gubernatorial communication with public institutions is equitable and more than apt to favor a few public higher education leaders including the president or chancellor of the state's flagship university.

Influences on the Governor

On higher education budget issues, governors ranked the most influential actors in the following order: the executive budget office, bi-partisan legislative leadership, the states' coordinating or governing board and university regents (see Table 4). The actors least influential in the budget process were party leaders, faculty unions and alumni. For program or administrative issues, governors cited the strong influence of university presidents and regents, and statewide coordinating or governing boards. Least influential on program or administrative issues were party leaders, alumni, faculty unions, and the media.

When the responses in Table 4 were broken down by political party, some variation was apparent. Democratic governors were more apt than Republicans to assign asignificant level of influence to higher education assistants on budget matters. In addition, Democrats were twice as likely

Table 4
INFLUENCE OF HIGHER EDUCATION ACTORS ON GUBERNATORIAL DECISIONMAKING

Actors	Governors Citing High Influence of Actors on Decisions*					
	Budget Issue (e.g. salary)			Program Issue (e.g. new curriculum)		
	No.	(%)	Rank	No.	(%)	Rank
Executive Budget Office	51	(73)	1	10	(14)	7
Asst. for H. E. or Education	14	(20)	7	12	(17)	5
Coordinating or Governing Board	37	(53)	3	30	(43)	3
Faculty Union	2	(3)	10	2	(3)	10
University Presidents	31	(44)	5	36	(51)	1
Alumni	2	(3)	10	2	(3)	10
Party Leadership (partisan)	4	(6)	9	2	(3)	10
Media	4	(6)	9	2	(3)	10
Legislative Leadership (bipartisan)	43	(61)	2	19	(27)	4
Students	4	(6)	9	5	(7)	9
Public	8	(11)	8	7	(10)	8
University Regents	35	(50)	4	32	(46)	2
Governor's Program Staff	24	(34)	6	11	(16)	6

Actors	Administrative Issue (e.g. auditing procedure)		
	No.	(%)	Rank
Executive Budget Office	10	(14)	5
Asst. for H. E. or Education	11	(16)	4
Coordinating or Governing Board	25	(36)	2
Faculty Union	1	(1)	10
University Presidents	32	(46)	1
Alumni	0	(0)	0
Party Leadership (partisan)	2	(3)	9
Media	2	(3)	9
Legislative Leadership (bipartisan)	15	(21)	3
Students	4	(6)	8
Public	5	(7)	7
University Regents	32	(46)	1
Governor's Program Staff	9	(13)	6

* All respondents were originally asked to cite the influence (high, moderate, low) of a particular policy actor across three categories of issues. For ease of presentation, only the high influence responses are listed and therefore the percentages represent the proportion of the total group (N=70).

as Republicans to cite the strong influence of bi-partisan legislative leadership on both budget and programmatic issues. Whether these divergencies are, in fact, tied to some influence of the political party is unclear.

Table 4 shows that budget issues are decided in the political arena--first by the governor's budget staff and then by key legislative leaders. It is interesting to note that partisan party leadership has less influence across all types of issues, suggesting support for the ideal that higher education should stay out of partisan politics (The Efficiency of Freedom: Report of the Committee on Government and Higher Education, 1959). This aversion to overt partisanship does not explain why faculty and alumni are seen as least effective, on one hand, and university presidents and regents as highly influential on the other. There is little doubt that campus interests are intensely partisan. While these findings do not explain the low influence attributed to faculty and alumni it may be more attributable to lack of organization, experience in lobbying, or credibility as an institutional spokesman.

It is apparent from Table 4 that higher education assistants are not generally perceived as influential policymakers by governors. These assistants may be in reality, liaison officials, assigned to a large and diverse set of interest groups rather than policy specialists. It is clear that university presidents and regents rank ahead of statewide coordinating or governing boards in influencing programmatic or administrative issues. One implication is that governors may expect university presidents to circumvent the statewide coordinating or governing board to make their institutional cases directly. This places a premium on an articulate and

politically savvy president. As a result, statewide coordinating or governing boards may be viewed as captives of the higher education bureaucracy and less prone to respond to the salient interests of the governor. Also noteworthy is the finding that university regents play an influential role with governors across all policy issues. This is not surprising since in most states governors have the authority to make appointments to public institution governing boards. Since these appointments are likely to be gubernatorial loyalists, the institution can seize the opportunity to enlist these regents or trustees on their behalf.

Gubernatorial Views on Private Higher Education

A majority of the former governors (39 or 56 percent) were opposed to state aid for private university facilities, equipment and campus needs. When the responses were divided by political party, Democrats were more apt to favor grants to private institutions than were Republicans (see Table 5).

When the responses were broken down by geographical region, some variation was evident. Among southern and midwestern governors, opposition to direct state grants to private higher education outweighed support by a two or three-to-one ratio. These findings lend support to the southern and midwestern tradition of comprehensive systems of public higher education including land-grant research universities, teachers colleges, technical schools and community colleges. Another noteworthy finding from Table 5 is the fifty-fifty split in opinion among the 13 northeastern governors. There is no ambivalence among these former state executives. In general, one would expect northeastern governors to strongly favor direct aid to private

Table 5

GUBERNATORIAL OPINION ON DIRECT AID FOR PRIVATE HIGHER EDUCATION FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT

Political Party	Agree (%)	Not Sure (%)	Disagree (%)
Democrats	14 (20)	6 (9)	20 (29)
Republicans	8 (11)	3 (4)	19 (27)
Total	22 (31)	9 (13)	39 (56)

Geographical Region	Agree (%)	Not Sure (%)	Disagree (%)
Northeast	6 (9)	0 (6)	7 (10)
South	5 (7)	2 (3)	14 (20)*
Midwest	4 (6)	6 (9)	12 (17)
West	7 (10)	1 (1)	6 (9)
Total	22 (31)	9 (13)	39 (56)

* South includes a single territorial governor (Puerto Rico). The percentages in parenthesis represent column totals as compared to the total respondents (70).

colleges and universities, especially considering their long tradition and lasting influence. It is possible that gubernatorial opposition to direct aid to private institutions emanates from adjacent states like New Jersey and Pennsylvania which have invested heavily in comprehensive public college and university systems.

In another but related question the former governors were asked whether the state should provide financial aid to resident students attending private higher education. Among those responding 56 percent strongly favored the notion that the state should provide such aid. The greatest support (69.2 percent) was found among former governors from the northeastern states. This is not surprising considering the strong New England and northeastern tradition of state support for private colleges and universities. It should be noted, however, that slightly less than one-third (31.4 percent) of the entire sample opposed state financial aid to private college and university students.

While no variation was found based on political party, when the responses were further partitioned by geographical region, an interesting difference became evident among respondents from midwestern and western states. Only 45 percent of midwestern governors favored state financial aid for students attending private institutions; the level of support was slightly higher (50 percent) among former governors from the western states.

These results should alert independent college associations, private institution presidents and state scholarship commission directors to the wide division of opinion among governors toward public funding of private universities. From a private sector perspective, the need for state

financial aid for non-public students is likely to get worse in the face of the proposed reduction in federal student financial aid contained in the 1986 Reagan budget.

Governors' Perception of Impact on Higher Education

Since the mid-fifties governors have become increasingly involved in higher education and have readily identified themselves with pivotal issues affecting colleges and universities. The current study asked governors to cite an area in which they had had an impact on the state's higher education system. These impact issues provide an excellent trend of gubernatorial involvement in higher education during the past 30 years (see Table 6).

The single gubernatorial respondent from the period 1945-54 identified a legacy of holding the line on institutional appropriations and moderating public reaction to controversial organizations and speakers. This was a time when many former soldiers were entering the world of higher education for the first time, in part because of the G.I. Bill. Gubernatorial intervention into higher education was generally laissez-faire.

The mid-1950s (1955-64) marked the beginning of many states' investment in a comprehensive higher education delivery system including community and technical colleges. Community colleges grew in response to a number of factors including the influx of a diverse group of G.I.s and students previously excluded. While this period of higher education growth began with the Eisenhower years, it hit a pressure point with the launching of Sputnik in 1957. This event helped trigger a massive federal investment in public higher education. Federal interest in encouraging more people to

Table 6

FORMER GOVERNORS LOOK AT IMPACT ON HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEM

1945 - 54 (1 respondent)	1955 - 64 (13 respondents)	1965 - 74 (32 respondents)	1975 -84 (23 respondents)
°Moderating public involvement over controversial H.E. issues °Legislation to improve buildings, faculty and curriculum °Holding line on appropriations	°Create branch university system °Develop community college system (3) °Incorporate 2 universities into state system °Double H. E. enrollment °Increase faculty salaries °Develop new medical school (3) °Expand size of smaller university °Develop engineering college at state university °Pass board issue for H.E. funding/expand approp. (4) °Develop technical college	°Expand state college system (4) °Develop medical schools (3) °Develop and expand community colleges (5) °Build libraries °Create state vocational college/tech school (3) °Establish veterinary school °Designate state department of H.E. °Restructure governance of public universities °Establish Coordinating Council for H.E. (5) °Hold off intrusions of legislature into H.E. °Increase appropriations for H.E. (4) °Create 2 state liberal arts colleges °Consolidation of state H.E. system	°Equalizing financial aid to students for private H.E. °Bring private and public presidents together (2) °Merger of state system (4) °Strengthen role of H.E. commission °Capital construction °Financial aid for low income students choosing private colleges °Develop vet school (2) °Raise university capital construction costs to a priority °Firing professor for leading student demonstration °H.E. reorganization into single Board of Regents °Establish justification for new programs and schools °Start university/technology program (2) °Regent appointments

Yearly categories indicate a ten-year period during which the governor served his last year.
Parentheses indicate frequency of responses by governors if greater than one.

work in the areas of research and development helped to build public university classrooms and laboratories and expand engineering schools and science curricula. The "race to the moon" forced states to reassess their vision of postsecondary education. Governors and legislatures in the early 1960s were soon calling for "master plans" that would define a university's mission and the state's educational priorities.

Public higher education experienced a period of massive growth between 1965 and 1974. Especially affected were professional schools (medical, dental, veterinary and law) and urban and regional community and junior colleges. The period of 1965-74 also witnessed the expansion of public universities and community colleges in response to the burgeoning enrollment of "baby boom" or post-WW II children. The 1960s also signaled the rapid emergence of statewide coordinating and governing boards or commissions to advise both governors and state legislatures (Berdahl, 1971).

The gubernatorial legacy for 1965-1974 was massive construction and expansion. By the early 1970s there was increasing fear over duplication of mission and program scope among higher education institutions. The cost of supporting public higher education had become a "budget sinkhole" for many states. Every institution wanted unlimited degree programs and a smorgasbord of curricular offerings. Higher education was requiring an ever larger share of a shrinking state budget pie, which was now beginning to feel the effects of the post-Vietnam economic slump. Governors and legislatures felt a need to maximize shrinking resources by consolidating and coordinating the states' massive public higher education systems.

The last ten years (1975-84) have been marked by a renewed commitment by governors to reorganize and consolidate the states' higher education systems. While limited capital construction has continued, governors and other state officials (state budget offices, coordinating or governing boards) have required greater justification for new programs. Higher education has become a "red ink" issue where expenses rapidly exceed available general revenue funds. When the national economy took a nose dive in the late 1970s, governors were publicly tied to holding down spending and growth in public higher education. Not until the early 1980s is there any mention of using universities to spawn state industrial initiatives with the private sector. Today high technology innovation and commercialization is a major impact area that is prompting strong gubernatorial involvement in public higher education.

CONCLUSIONS

While the impact of governors on higher education has been both varied and unsystematic, factors influencing these relations have remained largely unstudied. The current study of former governors supports the conclusion that governors play an important role in setting the tone and texture of statewide public higher education. Governors, by their very nature as political leaders of the state, assume a responsibility to advocate, to persuade, and to cajole various higher education interests in a desired direction.

Seventy-five percent of the former governors indicated that they spent at least ten (10) percent of their time on issues related to higher education. In many states this has necessitated the designation of one or

more special assistants for postsecondary education. A research question suggested by this conclusion is whether variations in gubernatorial time spent on higher education is a function of state variables (i.e., political culture, per capita income, state budget allocated for colleges and universities), policy issue variables (i.e., economic development, tuition), or idiosyncratic preferences.

Governors are involved in a varied set of higher education issues. The current study supports Lowi's process model that suggests that the type of issue determines the level of policy intervention. While governors have often become involved in distributive issues such as faculty salaries or institutional expansion or contraction, this policy involvement has likely required political compromises with other statewide interest groups which may eventually dilute the wishes of the governor. On redistributive policy issues, such as tuition or aid to private institutions, only a few elite interests are likely to be involved (i.e., budget office, coordinating or governing board) and the governors' undiluted influence is likely to prevail. One research question suggested by Lowi's policy intervention typology is whether a governor's choice of distributive or redistributive issues vary in relation to a governors' formal authority, legislative participation in policymaking, or diversity and strength of statewide higher education interest groups.

Governors and their immediate staff were in frequent monthly and weekly communication with state officials including bi-partisan legislative leaders, higher education legislative committees and state coordinating or governing board staff. Governors were the most influential proximate decision makers in higher education because of their control of the execu-

tive budget process. The governor was influenced the most on budget-related issues by executive budget office and bi-partisan legislative leaders, while university presidents and regents were most influential on program or administrative issues. One research question suggested by this conclusion is how do various university or statewide higher education policy actors influence a governor to intervene or withdraw from the policy determination process.

Former governors, regardless of political party and geographical region, were evenly split over state support to private higher education. While gubernatorial support of issues like state aid to private higher education has varied greatly during the past 30 years, one thing is clear: The stronger the relationship between an institution's programs and the political interests of the governor, the more likely governors have been to intervene directly in policy decision making.

The power of a governor to influence statewide higher education brings to mind the words of John Millett: "The future of higher education rests squarely upon the political relationship between higher education and the governor" (Millet, 1974, p. 141). While this forecast is now ten years old, its import still holds.

NOTES

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1 The Chronicle of Higher Education, 6 February 1985.

2 See for instance, Ronnie Dugger, Our Invaded Universities: Form, Reform, and New Starts (New York: W. W. Norton, 1974); Homer P. Rainey, The Tower and the Dome (Boulder: Pruett, 1971); William Anderson, The Wild Man from Sugar Creek (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1975); and T. Harry Williams, Huey Long (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1969).

3 In fall 1984 an eighteen item questionnaire was sent to the 218 living former governors as identified by the National Governors Association. Seventy questionnaires (32 percent) were returned; 40 from Democrats and 30 from Republicans. Their geographical description was: 13 Northeast, 20 South, 22 Midwest, 14 West and 1 Territory (Puerto Rico). The last year of office for the 70 respondents was: 1975-84 (23), 1965-74 (32), 1955-64 (13), 1945-54 (1), 1934-44 (1). The questionnaire responses were analyzed with a SPSS statistical package and cross-tabulated by political party, geographical region, state per-capita income, political culture and term in office. The author recognizes the limitations of this survey methodology particularly in gauging the absolute accuracy of the responses. The current study is intended to be descriptive and to illuminate areas warranting future research.

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